

M&M SUPERLINK: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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This Frequently Asked Questions file is intended to answer questions you, as an *M&M Superlink* publisher or potential publisher, may have about the *Superlink* program and license. If you have any questions not answered by this file, please feel free to contact Steve Kenson, *Mutants & Masterminds* Line Developer, at superlink@greenronin.com. All official *M&M Superlink* correspondence should go to this e-mail address.

Can I call my product a *Mutants & Masterminds* supplement? If not, then how do I let people know what it is?

"*Mutants & Masterminds*" and its logo are trademarks of Green Ronin Publishing and you *cannot* use them to market your product except as defined below. Improper use of our trademarks may result in revocation of the *M&M Superlink* license from the offending publisher.

You are producing and selling *M&M Superlink* products, and the license allows you to use the *M&M Superlink* name and logo, which imply compatibility with our game. Think of *M&M Superlink* as its own product line with its own brand identity. *Mutants & Masterminds* fans are already well acquainted with the *Superlink* program and, now that the logo is carried on our books as well, it should be immediately recognizable.

You may use the following statement on the cover and credits page of your product, and in related marketing, but it may not appear in larger than 12-point type: "Requires the *Mutants & Masterminds RPG* by Green Ronin Publishing for Use." This is the *only* instance where you can refer to *Mutants & Masterminds* by title.

If you use this statement in marketing materials or advertising, you must include the following legal language: "Mutants & Masterminds, M&M Superlink, the M&M Superlink logo, and Green Ronin are trademarks of Green Ronin Publishing and are used with permission."

Can I refer to the *Mutants & Masterminds* rulebook in my product?

If you want to refer to the core rules in your product, use the abbreviation "M&M" such as "See *M&M*, page 63, for more information." Any time you refer to the *Mutants & Masterminds* rulebook or game system, always use the terms "M&M" or "M&M system."

Can I make my product look like one of yours (using the same fonts and layout)?

No, our trade dress and graphic design are not Open Content. You should develop your own look and style for your product. Copying ours is a sure way to keep a product from being approved.

What kinds of products can I publish with *M&M Superlink*: adventures, sourcebooks, character collections, campaign settings?

All that and more! As long as you follow the terms of the Open Game License and the *M&M Superlink* license, and respect our Product Identity, you can publish whatever products you want.

What sort of *Superlink* products would Green Ronin like to see?

It's not so much what we'd like to see as what the fans of *Mutants & Masterminds* would like to see (and buy!) that's important. Here are a few things we've heard from *M&M* players about the sorts of *Superlink* products they like:

- **Adventures:** The conventional wisdom is "adventures don't sell," but there *is* a market for them. This is particularly true today, when the average gamer isn't in high school or college any more and doesn't have the same kind of free time to create RPG adventures as before. A product that eliminates the work of preparing an adventure has real value to the consumer. Short, fleshed-out, stand-alone adventures (like individual issues of a comic book) seem to have more appeal to *M&M* fans than big, complex "mega-adventures," and adventures easily adapted to a "generic" comic book setting tend to fare better than those suited only to a particular era or sub-genre.
- **Characters:** Superhero RPGs thrive off interesting characters, particularly new villains (the "monsters" of superhero RPGs). Solid collections of characters, well illustrated and presented, are popular with *M&M* players. Tangentially related to character collections are other sorts of challenges GMs can use like traps, crimes to foil, or disasters heroes can prevent.

- **Settings:** These sorts of products are tricky for superhero RPGs, including *M&M*. Instead of thinking of campaign settings in terms of entire "campaign worlds" (as is often the case for fantasy RPGs), it might be better to think of them as smaller modular locales for adventures. So, instead of trying to describe a whole world, provide a city, neighborhood, or even a single location suitable for use in an *M&M* campaign: a high-rise office building, courthouse, scientific laboratory, and so forth. Portable settings easily usable with various established campaign worlds like *Freedom City* have broader appeal than entire new worlds requiring groups to start new campaigns.

Beyond that, use your imagination; there's always a demand for innovative new products that serve *M&M* players, especially ones aimed at making it easier to play their favorite superhero game!

If I publish a product for another game system, can I include *Superlink* material?

Yes! We don't require *Superlink* products to be solely *M&M* compatible, and there have been *Superlink* products in the past with game stats for multiple systems. Naturally, you have to work out licensing issues for those other game systems on your own, but we have no problem with including *M&M Superlink* material in a product alongside other game systems. If you publish products for another superhero RPG, including *M&M Superlink* material will certainly increase your product's appeal to our fans.

Hero points and power points are listed as Product Identity in *Mutants & Masterminds*. Can I reference them in my product?

If you are just presenting stat blocks, you can use the terms "points" or "pp" in place of "power points." You're also allowed to list a cost for new powers in the format in the rulebook: "X points per rank."

If you want to refer to power points other than in stat blocks or hero points at all, you *must* obtain our permission. The best time to do this is in your query letter. If we grant permission for use, you must include the following in the product's legal text: "Hero points and power points are Product Identity of Green Ronin Publishing, used with permission."

Can I reference or use characters from your books?

No, you cannot. Characters from any of our *Mutants & Masterminds* products are not Open Content and you cannot use their names, images, or descriptions in any way. The same is true of any of our setting material, such as the *Freedom City* setting. Of course, you can feel free create your own characters and setting material.

What does a second edition of *Mutants & Masterminds* mean for the *M&M Superlink* program and me?

The new edition of *M&M* is covered by the *M&M Superlink* license. So if you have published *Superlink* products in the past (or been approved to do so), you can still do so, under the same terms as before.

The *Superlink* approval process also remains the same for the new edition: submit a proposal, then a PDF of the final product for approval. You use the same legal text, and the same logo. In fact, the new edition of *M&M* now carries the *Superlink* logo on its cover, increasing its visibility for your customers.

Can I still publish products using the first edition of *M&M* under the *Superlink* license?

No. All *M&M Superlink* products must be compatible with the Second Edition of *Mutants & Masterminds* to be approved for publication. You can still use Open Content from *M&M 1e* under the terms of the Open Game License, but not the *M&M Superlink* license. All new products carrying the *M&M Superlink* logo must be *2e* compatible.

What about *Superlink* product I've already published?

That's up to you. Obviously, you have the option of adapting or updating any pre-existing *Superlink* product for *M&M 2e*, if you wish, and re-releasing it. You can decide to make any such revision a new product, a free upgrade (for PDF products sold online), or whatever else you'd like. You can also offer conversions or updates to your older *Superlink* products under the license, if you wish. If you choose to update, you don't need to send a query letter (since you already got approval to do the product in the first place), but you do still need to submit a final pre-release PDF to superlink@greenronin.com for approval.

M&M 2e does not render all *1e* compatible products obsolete; the basic stats are the same between the two games. A *1e* stat block is usable (if perhaps not optimized) in *2e*, so there's still some life in *Superlink* products designed for *M&M 1e*. Since these products were already approved for publication, they can remain available even after the release of *M&M 2e*.

I have an idea for an unusual or non-traditional product. Can it be released under *Superlink*?

Contact us directly at superlink@greenronin.com with your proposal and we'll let you know.

What are the things I should watch out for as a *Superlink* publisher?

There are some common mistakes publishers make when preparing *M&M Superlink* products. Take a look at this list and try and avoid them; it'll make things easier for all concerned:

- **Proposals:** Remember, the first step of publishing an *M&M Superlink* product is to *always* send a proposal for the product to superlink@greenronin.com. If you plan to do a regular or semi-regular series of products, you can propose them all at the same time, but do still send us a proposal. This saves time for everyone if we know what *Superlink* publishers are working on. We can also give you guidance with regard to other *M&M* and *Superlink* products in the works so your idea doesn't conflict with others unnecessarily.
- **Legal Text:** Make sure to include *all* the necessary legal text in your product:
 - 1) The cover (or first page) of the product can say "Requires the *Mutants & Masterminds* RPG, Second Edition, for use" but this is optional. Remember, this statement and the legal text are the *only* places you can use the term "Mutants & Masterminds."
 - 2) The credits page *must* include the following text: "Mutants & Masterminds, M&M Superlink, the M&M Superlink logo, and Green Ronin are trademarks of Green Ronin Publishing and are used with permission."
 - 3) You *must* include a copy of the Open Game License, and Section 15 of the license must list *everything* from the Section 15 of the OGL in *Mutants & Masterminds 2e*, as well as any other sources of Open Content used in your product, along with your product's copyright declaration.
 - 4) You *must* have a declaration of Open Content, either in the credits page or within the Open Game License itself (in Section 8). You may also wish to have a declaration of Product Identity as well; usually whatever characters, names, and artwork you don't want considered Open Content. Any Open Content from other sources used in your product must remain Open. Other declarations of Open and Closed Content are up to you.
- **Important Points:** Although the terms "power points" and "hero points" are Product Identity of Green Ronin Publishing, we do grant permission to use them in *Superlink* products on a case-by-case basis. If you need to use these terms in a product, ask! If you are given permission, add the following text to the credits page: "Power points and hero points are Product Identity of Green Ronin Publishing and are used with permission."
- **Trademarks:** Do not, *do not*, use any of Green Ronin's trademarked material or Product Identity in your *Superlink* products (with the possible exception of power points and hero points, as mentioned previously). In particular, you are *not* allowed to use the name "Mutants & Masterminds" anywhere except in the legal text and the cover declaration. Do not refer to it in the text of the product except as "M&M" or "the M&M system." This is also true of marketing and advertising; you can't advertise your *Superlink* product as "the greatest Mutants & Masterminds adventure ever!" any more than a d20 license publisher can advertise a product as "a fantastic new adventure for Dungeons & Dragons!" Both are violations of trademarks. The same is true for any of our published characters, settings, or other books. Don't refer to them in your product or marketing at all. If you *really* want to refer to one of them, consult us directly and we can give you a definite answer one way or the other, but generally, you should avoid anything to do with our trademarks altogether. It makes life easier for everyone.
- **Presentation:** While we're not supposed to judge a book by its cover, a lot of people do, especially when it comes to game books. *Mutants & Masterminds* fans are used to high production values and we'll gladly cop to raising the bar where those are concerned. How you present your product is up to you, but our experience shows that professional and attractive production values not only make a product more enjoyable, they make it more likely to sell!

Are there places to discuss my *M&M Superlink* product?

Yes, two places, in fact. First, there's the *M&M Superlink* forum in the Atomic Think Tank forums at www.atomicthinktank.com. Second, there's a yahoo group called the *Superlink* Society set up by *Superlink* publishers to discuss their projects.